

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

Please replace the claims with the claims provided in the listing below wherein status, amendments, additions and cancellations are indicated.

1. (Currently amended) A method of producing crosslinked acrylic moisture absorbing fibers, which comprises applying a crosslinking treatment with a hydrazine compound and a hydrolytic treatment with sodium carbonate to acrylic fibers made of an acrylonitrile-base copolymer containing at least 1% by weight and not more than 5% by weight a comonomer having an acidic group or salt thereof as a comonomer component.

2. (Currently amended) A method of producing crosslinked acrylic moisture absorbing fibers, which comprises introducing a crosslinked structure into acrylic fibers made of an acrylonitrile-base copolymer containing at least 1% by weight and not more than 5% by weight a comonomer having an acidic group as a comonomer component using a hydrazine compound such that the increase in the nitrogen content becomes from 0.4 to 2.0% ~~mmol/g~~ and carrying out a hydrolytic reaction with sodium carbonate by controlling such that the amount of the carboxylic group becomes from 0.6 to 4.0 mmol/g.

3. (Currently amended) The method of producing crosslinked acrylic moisture absorbing fibers according to claim 1 or 2 wherein the comonomer having the acidic group or salt thereof is at least one compound selected from the group